



The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: City of Seattle NORTHGATE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE BRIDGE TIGER application

Dear Secretary Foxx:

The Cascade Bicycle Club strongly supports the application of the City of Seattle for funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER grant program for the remaining funds needed to construct bicycle and pedestrian projects in the Northgate Urban Center area. The Northgate Urban Center includes two key transit hubs, the current bus transit center for King County Metro and the future light rail station for Sound Transit.

Founded in 1970, Cascade Bicycle Club (Cascade) is the largest regional bicycle advocacy organization with nearly 16,000 members. Cascade supports the regional expansion of Sound Transit's link light rail system and improving pedestrian and bicycle access to the light rail stations.

In 2012, more than 500 Cascade members and hundreds of neighborhood residents urged Sound Transit to shift station-access investments from building a parking garage toward investing in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure at the future Northgate Light Rail Station.

For Cascade and the neighbors, the most important project among the planned bicycle and pedestrian investments was the construction of the Northgate Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge across Interstate 5, creating a connection from the North Seattle Community College and the UW Medicine Center directly into the mezzanine of the future Link light rail station. Without that connection, both the community college (with its 14,000 students) and the medicine center would be beyond a reasonable walking distance of 20 minutes.

As a result of the community's advocacy to get a greater investment in bicycle and pedestrian access to the station, Sound Transit and the City of Seattle agreed to each invest \$5 million in the bicycle/pedestrian bridge – and an additional \$5 million each for other pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the Northgate Urban Center. The TIGER VI grant would fill the remaining construction costs, as well as other needed pedestrian and infrastructure outlined in the Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan, Seattle Bicycle Master Plan, and the Northgate Urban Design Plan. These projects are all well within the Federal Transit Administration's three-mile and half-mile rules for investments in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure as part of a transit project.

A bridge across I-5 is the single most important non-motorized connectivity infrastructure investment for the Northgate Urban Center. The bridge would provide critical access to transit — whether it's today's Metro Transit Center or the future Link light rail station — for thousands of students, workers, and residents who are currently cut-off by the I-5 freeway, which prevents transit from being within a reasonable walking distance.

Creating A Better Community Through Bicycling

A station-access study by Sound Transit shows the bridge is one of the most effective infrastructure investments for increasing ridership on its future light rail line. Once the light rail and the bridge are built, college students will be able to easily travel between different college campuses in the region, including North Seattle Community College, the University of Washington, Seattle Central Community College, Seattle University, and Highline Community College.

For bicyclists, the bridge will provide a key east-west connection. Seattle's topography limits the number of east-west routes across the city that can be relatively flat for bicyclists, and the I-5 freeway further limits those options. The city's Bicycle Master Plan calls for building the Northgate Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge as it is one of the few opportunities to create an east-west connection. Other city and neighborhood plans call for the building the bridge as a way to re-integrate the neighborhood bisected by I-5.

The Northgate Urban Center is dominated by a suburban shopping mall and car-traffic. Through the City of Seattle's land use planning and the region's increased investment in transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure, Northgate will soon be transformed into a truly urban hub that's a great place to live, work, and play.

The City of Seattle has presented a strong case-for statement for securing the remaining needed funds to build the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, especially the bicycle/pedestrian bridge across I-5. This is why neighbors, businesses, and advocacy organizations like Cascade all support this grant application. On behalf of our nearly 16,000 members, we urge you to approve the City of Seattle's TIGER VI grant application.

If you have any questions about Cascade's support for this project, feel free to contact me at 206-856-4788 or brock.howell@cascadebicycleclub.org.

Sincerely,

Brock Howell
Policy & Government Affairs
Cascade Bicycle Club

CC:

Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Governor Jay Inslee
Congressman Jim McDermott
Mayor Edward B. Murray, Seattle